



**European Committee
of the Regions**



Challenges and Potential for freshwater Aquaculture

EVENT REPORT¹

1. Summary

The workshop was organised jointly by the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Committee of the Regions. It took place on 22 May 2019 from 09:30 to 13:30 in the premises of the European Committee of the Regions, in room JDE 51, Rue Belliard 101, Brussels

2. Objectives

In 2018, the Committee organised jointly with the European Commission the conference "EU Aquaculture – Farmed in EU Regions", sharing best practices and identifying difficulties. During the event, the Scientific Advice mechanism presented its report "Food from the Oceans".

The workshop "Challenges and Potential for freshwater Aquaculture" was designed as a follow-up of the conference, focusing this time entirely on freshwater aquaculture. The main goal of the workshop was to identify bottlenecks and propose solutions for landlocked regions aiming to develop freshwater aquaculture.

A second objective of the event was to look into the role of freshwater aquaculture in food security and production, as well as its role for achieving UN's sustainable development goals, and the presentations of the panellists were structured accordingly.

3. Main outcome:

- Ancient tradition, currently responsible for about 60% of aquaculture productions
- A suitable reply to future societal challenges, however the production itself is highly dependent on suitable climate conditions and market situation. Other challenges include community acceptance, environmental concerns, spatial planning and licencing. Stable income for fish farmers is an important issue as fish farms are situated often in peripheral regions, where even few permanent working places contribute significantly to the labour market

¹ This document is not an official document of the CoR. It represents the views of the NAT secretariat as co-organisers of the event

- Freshwater aquaculture (FA) is a suitable tool to offer sustainable food in landlocked regions, providing jobs where they are much needed, supporting UN's Sustainable Development Goals DGs 1 ,2 ,6 ,7 ,8 , 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17. (SDGs, see annex) – Role of the local and regional authorities: think globally, act locally
- Fish Gap – demand for fish is higher than production, and growing
- Development of FA is a member state competence and responsibility, depending entirely on the structure of the national development and funding programmes; Local and regional authorities are key for the development of the sector as they implement policies close to the producers
- FA is not included in the data collection under the EMFF and there is no sufficient data available for an evidence based policy. The lack of data is endangering the sector to a certain extent
- Stability in supply is key for retailers, where most fish is bought. Farmed products are likely to increase their presence in the EU market, but critical size is needed; local production and short market circuits contribute to environmentally, economically and socially sustainable food production
- FLAG²s can provide (limited) funding, promotion, facilitation and support (not only financial) via the CLLD mechanism. Local and regional authorities with a key role in encouraging the planning and development of such programmes and projects
- Subject of heavy regulation and difficult licensing procedures, no "one-stop-shop" approach: food safety, environmental, forestry, animal welfare, spatial planning etc. rules. In cooperation with regional and local authorities, Member States are advised to limit red tape and apply a one-stop shop approach where possible. Harmonisation across Europe would be beneficial to the sector
- Labelling, origin and repackaging of imported fish products is still an issue in the EU (consumer information on origin)

4. Presentations

Welcome addresses:

Mr Jesus Gamallo – CoR Rapporteur on aquaculture

Mrs Ancuta KAZIMIROVICZ, National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Romania

Panel I 10:00 European freshwater aquaculture – challenges and potential

- **Dr. Pier SALVADOR**, Italian Fish Farmer Association, on behalf of the Aquaculture advisory council
Climate & Market changes: a new challenge for fresh water fish farmers
- **Urszula BUDZICH – TABOR**, FARNET
"Opportunities of Community-Led Local Development in aquaculture areas"

² Fisheries Local Action Groups

- **Emil KITANOV**, aquaculture producer
Overview of the challenges of freshwater aquaculture in Bulgaria
- **Chiara BACCI**, European Commission
Presentation of EUROBAROMETER Survey on "EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products"

Panel II 11:30 Freshwater aquaculture in the scope of UN's sustainable development goals

- **Dr Victoria CHOMO**, FAO:
Freshwater Aquaculture in the Scope of UN's Sustainable Development Goals
- **Benoit THOMASSEN** – College des Producteurs, Belgium:
Caviar Labelling, a global issue
- **Béla HAVASI-KOVÁCS**, Hungarian Research Institute for Fisheries and Aquaculture (HAKI): Values and opportunities of pond aquaculture in the frame of UN's sustainable development goals
- **Felix LEINEMANN** European Commission
Freshwater Aquaculture in the context of the Common Fisheries Policy, the European Maritime Fisheries Fund and the newly introduced open method of coordination.
- **Alexander DÖRING**, Secretary General of **European Feed Manufacturers' Federation** (FEFAC)
The European fish feed producers' constant push for innovation and sustainability in aquaculture: what lies ahead?

All delivered presentations are available on the event website under the link "Related Information":

<https://cor.europa.eu/en/events/Pages/freshwater-aquaculture.aspx>

The screenshot shows the website interface for the European Committee of the Regions. At the top, there is a navigation menu with options: About, Our work, Members, News, Events, Engage, and Europe in my Region. Below the menu, there are social media icons for YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. The main header reads "The EU's Assembly of Regional and Local Representatives". A breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: "You are here > Events > Challenges and Potential for Freshwater Aquaculture". A search bar and a language dropdown set to "English" are also visible.

The main content area is titled "Challenges and Potential for Freshwater Aquaculture" and includes the date and time "22/05/2019 : 09:30 - 13:30 | JDE 51 | Fisheries and maritime affairs". It features a photograph of an aquaculture pond and the text: "Challenges and Potential for Freshwater Aquaculture". Below the photo, it states: "A joint workshop organised by the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Committee of the Regions" and "22 May 2019".

On the right side, there is a "Related Information" section, which is highlighted with a red box. It contains a list of presentations:

- ▶ Agenda
- ▶ Presentation Dr. Pier SALVADOR, Aquaculture advisory council
- ▶ Presentation Urszula BUDZICH – TABOR, FARNET
- ▶ Presentation Chiara BACCI, European Commission
- ▶ Presentation Dr. Victoria CHOMO
- ▶ Presentation Benoit THOMASSEN, Collège des Producteurs
- ▶ Presentation Béla HALASI-KOVÁCS
- ▶ Presentation Alexander DÖRING, FEFAC

Below this list is a "Related Events" section with a thumbnail image of a coastal town and a boat.

Interpretation from and into Spanish, German, English, French, Italian and Romanian Languages was provided and the event was web-streamed³

³ <https://livestream.com/corlive1/events/8672695>

ANNEX: 2030 UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ⁴



According to FAO, aquaculture and fisheries contribute to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, and 15 (State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture, FAO, 2018).

⁴ Source Béla HAVASI-KOVÁCS,